



# Childhood **LEAD POISONING PREVENTION**

A PROGRAM OF THE KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT



## **Childhood Blood Lead Poisoning Prevention Social Media Toolkit**

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## INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is designed to assist partner organizations to share information with the public about childhood blood lead poisoning, blood lead testing, and how to prevent lead poisoning. Information is provided as a general overview regarding lead poisoning and prevention to present key messaging ideas for basic communication purposes only.

### Primary Audience

1. Targeted Populations (i.e. parents of children under 6 years of age, pregnant women, adults who are exposed to lead through their occupations or hobbies)
2. Targeted Population Providers
3. Social Media Audience

## BASIC LEAD POISONING INFORMATION:

### 1. What is lead?

- a. A naturally occurring metal substance.
- b. Additive that was used heavily in gasoline and paints prior to 1978.
- c. Lead was banned from being used in products due to toxic effects.

### 2. Where can lead be found now?

- a. Occupational
  - Lead smelting, mining, and extraction
  - Manufacturing products containing or coated with lead (i.e. batteries, bullets, circuits, metal parts)
  - Lead abatement, cleanup, and renovation
  - Demolition of buildings and structures
  - Welding and metal cutting
- a. Paints
  - Lead-based glazed or painted dishware
  - Lead-based paint dust that is a result of paint deterioration over time
  - Non-residential or commercial paints
- b. Hobbies
  - Ammunitions reloading and indoor firing ranges
  - Use of lead weights for fishing
  - Stained-glass making with lead solder
  - Applying lead-based glazes to ceramics
  - Conducting home renovation in structures built prior to 1978
- c. Items imported from other countries:
  - Spices
  - Dishware
  - Jewelry

- Makeup
- Home remedies (i.e. Alarcon, coral, liga, bali goli, kandu, alkohol, surma, azarcon, greta)
- d. Soil
  - Soil around houses with deposited lead-based exterior paint
  - Soil located in the vicinity of heavily trafficked roadway

### 3. How are adults and children exposed?

- a. The most common route of exposure is ingestion through the mouth, followed by inhalation through the nose and mouth. <sup>(3)</sup>
- b. Children <sup>(1)</sup>
  - Children are smaller and more susceptible to illness which means they don't need as much exposure to the lead for it to have a harmful effect.
  - Young children that are crawling and spending time on the floor are more likely to be exposed to dirt and dust that could be contaminated with lead or from lead-based paint deterioration.
  - Young children are more likely to put their hands and objects in their mouths that might contain lead.
- c. Adults <sup>(1)</sup>
  - Exposure can occur through their work.
  - Residual lead dust can be brought into the home on clothing and deposited in vehicles.
  - Certain hobbies can result in exposure or contact with lead such as indoor firing ranges with poor ventilation.

### 4. How do you know if you have been exposed to high levels of lead?

- a. The only way to know for sure if you have been exposed to lead is to get a blood lead test.
- b. Talk with your doctor about your concerns and potential risk factors for exposure to lead.
  - The provider may conduct a screening questionnaire that will ask you questions about ways you or your child might have been exposed to lead.
  - A screening test can be performed, which is a capillary blood test, and is usually a finger stick. But if the test results for blood lead are elevated, then a venous blood draw will be done to confirm the levels of lead in the blood.

### 5. What does being exposed to lead do?

- a. Low levels of lead exposure may have no definite or readily observable symptoms. <sup>(2)</sup>
- b. Even low levels of lead exposure can affect attention, language, memory, and cognitive flexibility. <sup>(2)</sup>
- c. Lead exposure can also cause reproductive problems, hypertension, and renal problems. <sup>(2)</sup>

## 6. What can you do to prevent lead exposure?

- a. Make every day lead safe.
  - Safe cleaning practices include activities such as: Wet mopping or wet-wiping floors, porches and window sills.
  - Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter.
  - Wash your hands after cleaning.
  - Clean the residence weekly or when you start to notice dust and dirt gather.
- b. Use a water filter that is certified to remove lead if you are unsure about the quality of your home plumbing.
  - Run water from the tap to flush the pipes before drinking or cooking with the water if it hasn't been used recently.
- c. Take shoes off before going into the house.
- d. Eat a diet high in calcium and iron. <sup>(1)</sup>
- e. Wash lead-soiled clothing separately from other wash if a family member works or has hobbies that deal with lead.
- f. Keep all items used in a lead-based hobby or job away from children and family.
- g. Paint over peeling or chipping paint.
- h. Use a certified Repair and Remodeling Professional when making updates to your home. You can find a list of Kansas certified lead professionals here:  
[http://www.kshealthyhomes.org/contact\\_lead\\_professionals.htm](http://www.kshealthyhomes.org/contact_lead_professionals.htm)

## KEY MESSAGE AREAS

1. Most lead poisonings come from lead-based paints in homes that have started to chip or deteriorate into dust in the home.
2. If a child has risk characteristics, it is important to get your child tested for lead poisoning at an early age.
3. Parents and guardians who work in lead industries or who have hobbies that might expose them to lead should take precautions to reduce exposing family members to lead.
4. Pregnant mothers who have high levels of lead can pass to their unborn baby and to their newborn through breastfeeding.
5. Oftentimes, there are no visible symptoms of lead poisoning.
6. The only way to know if you have been poisoned by lead is to get a blood test done.

## CALLS-TO-ACTION

1. Learn about lead poisoning.
2. Understand the effect that lead poisoning can have on the body and developmental growth.



3. Learn about how to prevent lead exposure.
4. Understand that blood testing is the only way to know for sure what your blood lead levels are.
5. Provide ways to prevent lead exposure.
6. Know where to find more information on blood lead poisoning.

## HASHTAGS

1. #LeadAware
2. #leadpoisoning
3. #ChildhoodLead
4. #LeadFreeKids

## SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGING IDEAS:

1. **Post/Tweet:** Are you ready for back to school? Yearly child wellness checks are a good time to talk with your doctor about #ChildhoodLead poisoning.
2. **Post/Tweet:** Are you #LeadAware? October is Blood #LeadPoisoning awareness month. Find out more at: <http://www.kdheks.gov/epi/CLPPP.htm>
3. **Post/Tweet:** If your house was built before 1978, it is likely to contain some lead-based paint. Regular cleaning can prevent that paint from becoming a dust hazard.



4. **Post/Tweet:** Did you know eating vegetables that are high in iron and calcium can reduce the impact of lead poisoning on the body? By being #LeadAware you can learn how to help prevent lead poisoning and reduce the impact of lead in your body.
5. **Post/Tweet:** Did you know you might be consuming lead and not even know it? To be #LeadAware visit: <http://www.kdheks.gov/epi/CLPPP.htm>



6. **Post/Tweet:** Did you know that lead is sometimes found in food, such as spices, that are imported from other countries? Be #LeadAware and avoid the use of products that may contain lead. Visit: [kdheks.gov/epi/CLPPP.htm](http://kdheks.gov/epi/CLPPP.htm)
7. **Post/Tweet:** #LeadPoisoning may not show any signs or symptoms and most people don't feel any different. The only way to know if you or your family have been exposed to lead is to get tested. Be #LeadAware.
8. **Post/Tweet:** Make a date to get lead tested! If you work in an industry that handles lead or if you enjoy a favorite pastime like target shooting, fishing, or ceramics, now is a good time to become #LeadAware so you can prevent exposing your family to #LeadPoisoning.
9. **Post/Tweet:** Is your home lead safe? #LeadPoisoning is about more than paint and water. Find the checklist at: [kdheks.gov/epi/CLPPP.htm](http://kdheks.gov/epi/CLPPP.htm)



## CHECK WITH KDHE FOR NEW AND UPDATED DOWNLOADABLE OUTREACH MATERIALS SUCH AS:

- Childhood Blood Lead Poisoning Prevention Flyer
- Blood Lead Poisoning Prevention Postcard
- Blood Lead Poisoning Prevention Provider FAQ
- Elevated Blood Lead Disease Investigation Guidelines
- Lead Risk Questionnaire

## OTHER RESOURCES:

- [Kansas Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program](#)
- [Kansas Environmental Public Health Tracking Program](#)
- [Kansas Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Prevention Program](#)
- [Federal Action Plan to Reduce Childhood Lead Exposures and Associated Health Impacts](#)
- [CDC Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program](#)
- [EPA Lead Website](#)

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2. Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry (ATSDR). Lead Toxicity: What Are Possible Health Effects From Lead Exposure? 2017. Available from:  
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